

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 5, 11, 15 and 18 have been amended, and claims 2-4, 16-17 and 19-20 have been cancelled. Claims 21-31 have been newly added. No new matter is being presented, and approval and entry are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 5-15, 18, and 21-31 are pending and under consideration. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Objection To The Claims

The Office Action objects to claims 1-20 as being unclear what type of IP addresses are used for communicating/distributing information to each of the terminal devices (Office Action; page 2, section 3). The Office Action notes that IP addresses are often assigned on a temporary basis, but asserts that the amended claims imply that they are permanently assigned.

The objection is traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Independent claims 1, 11, 15 and 18 are amended to recite “terminal information including addresses each identifying a terminal device belonging to said group, on the network using the IP protocol”.

IP address may include a MAC address, which can identify a terminal on a network using the IP protocol. Accordingly, the above recited, terminal information can be considered as including a MAC address. Applicants direct the Examiner’s attention to the specification at paragraphs 0073 and 0077 of the published application for a references to IP addresses.

Applicants therefore respectfully request that the objection be withdrawn.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. 102

In the Office Action, at pages 3-6, numbered paragraph 4-13, claims 1-6, 9-12 and 14-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Sheridan (U.S. Pat. 5760917). The rejection is traversed and reconsideration is requested.

In the system of Sheridan, central image server and storage 20 apparently receives and stores the granted access right set in association with electronic addresses for end users (third parties) 40A-40N from the stations (first terminals) 2A-2N. The central image server and storage transmits to the third party electronic address, an electronic address for the central image server and storage, a listing of the access rights of the granted set associated with the third party electronic address, and the access identification.

In Sheridan, a second terminal or the third party apparently transmits to the central image server and storage, a request to access the image set in accordance with one of the granted access rights to allow the second terminal to access the image set only in accordance with the granted access right set.(see Fig. 3, column 2, line 20-45).

Accordingly, as to claim 1, Sheridan fails to indicate “a first receiving portion receiving, from one terminal device belonging to said group, a distribution request including a Uniform Resource Locator as access information”, “a second receiving portion accessing said distribution information stored in the content server, based on said access information included in the distribution request received by said first receiving portion, and receiving said distribution information accessed”, and “a second storage portion storing said distribution information accessed and received by said second receiving portion”.

Additionally, Sheridan fails to indicate “a first transmitting portion transmitting said distribution information stored in said second storage portion to the other terminal devices

according to the distribution destination information”. Namely, in the system of Sheridan, the second terminal apparently transmits to the central image server and storage a request to access the image set in accordance with one of the granted access rights, and is allowed to access the image. In stark contrast, in claim 1, the information distribution device transmits the distribution information to a second terminal according to the distribution destination information. This difference is based on which party is charged for obtaining the distribution information or image.

According to the system of Sheridan, the second terminal transmits a request to access the image set in accordance with one of the granted access rights, and is allowed to access the image. Thus, in the system of Sheridan, at least a transmission fee for accessing the image should be charged to the second terminal, which is a party receiving the image.

Meanwhile, the amended claim 1 clearly recites “a third receiving portion receiving a bill of charges from a device billing charges for the distribution information when the distribution information is chargeable; and a second transmitting portion transmitting said bill of charges received by said third receiving portion either to the one terminal device having transmitted the distribution request or to a telecommunications carrier to which the one terminal device subscribes”.

Thus, in the claim 1, the one terminal device having transmitted the distribution request is charged, but the other terminal devices, which receive the distribution information are not charged. Applicants also respectfully submit that Sheridan does not indicate which party is charged in the distribution of the image or distribution information, and therefore for at least this additional reason, claim 1 is allowable.

The remaining claims 5-15, and 18 also include the above discussed features recited in claim 1, accordingly, the rejection of claims under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) should be traversed.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. 103

In the Office Action, at pages 6-8, numbered paragraph 14-19, claims 7-8 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Sheridan, as applied to claims 1-6, 9-12 and 14-20 above, and further in view of Official Notice.

The rejection is traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Claim 7-8 and 13 are dependent on independent claims 1 and 11, respectively, and thus, since the addition of Official Notice fails to cure the critical deficiency discussed above in regard to Sheridan as applied against the base claims, it is respectfully submitted that these dependent claims are allowable.

Additionally, Applicants respectfully challenge the use of Official Notice in the instant application, and assert that the features of claims 7, 8, and 13, namely that “said distribution request further includes a distribution time for specifying a time for distributing said distribution information, and said first transmitting portion distributes said distribution information at said distribution time”, “said terminal device information stored in said first storage portion includes information for representing an information format displayable on a display portion of the terminal device, and ... said information distribution device further comprises a conversion/filtering portion for converting or filtering said distribution information to a format capable of being displayed on a display portion of said terminal device, based on said information for representing said displayable information format”, and “said distribution request further includes a distribution time for specifying a time for distributing said distribution information” are not proper subjects of Official Notice.

New Claims

As for newly added claims 21-31, Sheridan fail to teach “a processor controlling the communication unit to access to a content server and obtain the information by using the access destination information upon receiving of the request and controlling the communication unit to distribute the information obtained from the content server to the plurality of terminals” (see claim 21) and “wherein the server accesses to a content server to obtain the information by using the access destination information upon receiving of the request”(see claim 29).

These features are supported at least at page 15, lines 22-26 and page 23, lines 20-27 of the specification.

Namely, according to the Office Action, central image server and storage 20 and distributed processor scanners 2A-2N in Fig. 3 of Sheridan apparently correspond to a server and a content server of the claims, respectively. However, in Fig. 6 of Sheridan, arrows 10 and 11 are indicated as having *one direction*, while arrows 30 and 120 are indicated as having two directions.

Transmission can be made from the scanners 2A-2N to HUB 21, but accessing is not possible from HUB 21 to scanners 2A-2N, because the direction of arrow 10 is indicated only from the scanners 2A-2N to HUB 20. Therefore, neither the drawings nor the specification of Sheridan disclose or suggest the features of the new claims.

In accordance with the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all outstanding objections and rejections have been overcome. Further, all the pending claims patentably distinguish over the prior art. Thus, there being no further outstanding objections or rejections, the application is submitted as being in condition for allowable which action is earnestly solicited.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,

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